

What Every Patient Should Know for the 2018-19 Flu Season

What Every Patient Needs to Know About the Flu Vaccine

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continue to recommend annual flu vaccine for everyone aged 6 months and older. The nasal spray flu vaccine, FluMist®, is recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) as a vaccine option in 2018-19 for healthy, non-pregnant persons aged 2-49 years.

Key Facts

- FluMist® was not recommended in the U.S. for the 2016-17 and 2017-18 seasons because of concerns of poor effectiveness during earlier flu seasons.
- The manufacturer of FluMist® changed the virus that was thought to be the problem. New data suggest this new vaccine virus is more effective, so ACIP recommended FluMist® as an option for flu vaccine this season.
- The decision whether to recommend FluMist® is an example of using science to help improve the public's health. ACIP will continue to review data on how effective FluMist® is as they become available.

Patient Information

- Getting flu vaccine is the best way to keep from getting the flu. Protect yourself and others by getting flu vaccine.
- If you spend time with babies younger than 6 months of age, it is important that you get flu vaccine to help protect them because they are too young to get it themselves. And some children 6 months through 8 years old need 2 flu vaccines this season. Ask your provider how many your child needs.
- If your child gets the flu shot, parents can make the vaccine visit better by doing things to help make the shot hurt less:
 - Hold your child
 - Bring a favorite toy to the appointment
 - Offer a favorite meal or snack right after the shot so they have something to look forward to
- Even healthy people can get the flu, and it can be serious. Ask your provider for your flu vaccine today!

For more information, refer to CDC's Frequently Asked Flu Questions 2018-2019 Influenza Season at www.cdc.gov/flu/about/season/flu-season-2018-2019.htm.